

REMARKS

The Patent Office has issued a restriction requirement for this patent application and has taken the position that each of sixteen different figures represents a different patentably distinct species. The Patent Office has demanded election among these sixteen species. Applicants dispute many of the statements made in the restriction requirement. However, responsive to the restriction requirement, and in an effort to advance prosecution of this patent application, Applicants have amended the claims, as described above, which includes canceling many of the previously pending claims. These amendments render moot many of the statements made in the restriction requirement. But these amendments and cancellation of claims are made without prejudice, and Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original claims, and any other claims that are supported by the original disclosure, in one or more continuing patent applications.

Applicants submit that the different figures that were provided in the original disclosure, as well as the written description, show and describe various examples of different embodiments of the invention, but do not define the scope of what is claimed. Rather, Applicants submit that the claims define the scope of the invention. Further, Applicants contend that the claims may appropriately be supported by any part of the original disclosure, including any figure, any part of the written description, or a combination thereof. As a result, Applicants dispute that it is necessary or appropriate, at least in this case, to distinguish species of the invention for purposes of a restriction requirement based on different figures. However, to comply with the requirement for a provisional election, and for that purpose only, Applicants provisionally elect the claims illustrated by figure 20. Moreover, Applicants elect the substantially reduced number of claims that remain pending in this patent application, and have canceled the non-elected claims.

Claims 1-12, 14-24, 29, 30, and 52-54 are now pending in this patent application, for a total of 28 pending claims. Claims 13, 25-28, and 31-51 have been canceled without prejudice, and claims 52-54 are new. Claims 1-15, 17-24, 29, and 30

have been amended, while claim 16 is in its original form. Applicants submit that no new matter has been introduced by any of the claim amendments or new claims. Specifically, support for the claim amendments and the new claims can be found in the original disclosure, including in Fig. 20, in paragraphs 0193-0195, and in the originally filed claims, as examples. For instance, much of the text that was added to claim 1 was taken from claims 13 and 14. Support may be found in other portions of the original disclosure as well.

Applicants submit that all of the pending claims are in a form suitable for examination and that it would not be unduly burdensome to examine all of the claims currently pending. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner proceed to examine all of the pending claims. Should the Examiner have any questions or further concerns about this patent application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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By



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